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Atari Online News, Etc.
A-ONE Online Magazine
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~ New TeraDesk Released! ~ Sexist Urinals On eBay!~ Google Ad Sales Soar!
~ First \$100 Laptops Due ~ Web GOP Outnumber Dems ~ Nintendo Woos AARP!

-* Too Much English On The Web? *-
-* Seagate Built-In Encryption Drives! *-
-* MacIT Convention Returns To MacWorld Expo! *-

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->From the Editor's Keyboard
"~~~~~"

"Saying it like it is!"

Well, it's now been six months since I "retired" from my job. I really cannot believe that it has been that long already. Wow! Here it is, now Autumn. I have to admit that I've had a productive "off season" and managed to get things done that I would never been able to find the time to do while I was employed. And, I still have plenty of projects that require my attention. But, I've decided that we still need two incomes for awhile longer, so I'm on the hunt for work. I have made a number of contacts and established quite a few working relationships with various organizations over the years, so I'm still feeling pretty good at the moment. We'll see what happens. Maybe I'll still remain semi-retired.

I'm sure that Joe has mentioned it again this week, but I will also. Here in America, Election Day is next Tuesday. I urge you all to get out and vote. This is your opportunity to have a voice, so don't take it lightly.

Until next time...

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TeraDesk 3.85 Released

Version 3.85 of TeraDesk open-source desktop for the 16-bit and 32-bit lines of Atari computers is available at:

<http://solair.eunet.yu/~vdjole/teradesk.htm>

Beside the fixes for several bugs, this release contains some new features that were supposed to be part of more comprehensive changes intended be released as V3.90; however, because of the long time spent to find one of the bugs, and also due to some other circumstances, there was not enough progress made for a V3.90, and therefore this interim release.

See the history file for more information about latest changes and new features.

Have fun.

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PEOPLE ARE TALKING
compiled by Joe Mirando
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. It's going to be a short column this week, but it's a sign of the times, I guess.

I did want to mention a couple of things to you though. First of all, you know what I miss? Remember those old editorials and editorial rebuttals that they used to do on television as a part of the local news? I miss those. Nah, they didn't always deal with earthshaking topics... sometimes no more that whether or not to expand the local high school's gymnasium, or whether to plant marigolds or geraniums at the town playground... but it was an outlet for people. A way to have a voice. I'm left to wonder to myself if it was just a fad, or if we had hit upon something that gave us a real voice and the ability to disagree freely and, more importantly, civilly. Heck, even Archie Bunker did an editorial rebuttal. And if it's good enough for Archie... <grin>

The other thing I wanted to mention was about voting. I can't remember a mid-term election where there was so much activity. I'm not sure if that's a good thing or a bad thing, or who it might be a good or a bad thing for. But one thing's for sure: It's your right, your privilege, and your responsibility to vote. Take a hint from that old Nike commercial and just do it.

Now let's get to the news, hints, tips and info from the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup
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Philipp Reichmuth asks about a demo version of MagiC:

"Is there a demo version of MagiC around? I wanted to try getting it to run under ARAnyM, and I don't want to have to buy the full version. I seem to recall there used to be a demo version during MagiX!/MagiC 2 times, but obviously it's not around anymore. Does anyone have a demo version?"

'Saxer' tells Philipp:

"Look at this Link:
<http://www.application-systems.de/atari/produktefuratari.html> "

Philipp replies:

"That's the Application Systems Heidelberg homepage. No demo there. The only demo available there is MagiC PC (and, incidentally, that doesn't run under ARAnyM but gives four bombs).

Under Gemulator 2000, the Atari part of the MagiC PC demo apparently runs. So I thought it maybe runs under ARAnyM, too. Apparently this is not the case."

David Wade adds:

"As far as I can tell its only old versions that works. I can't get either of my 5, 6 or 6.2 versions to work under gemulator..."

Tony Belding asks about running GFA BASIC with an emulator:

"I have an Atari ST emulator running on my Power Mac now, and I recently got my hands on the GFA BASIC manual and "The GFA BASIC Book" tutorial as published by Michtron. (That would be for GFA Basic 2, not 3.) The problem is. . . I still don't have the GFA Basic 2 interpreter, and I haven't been able to find anyplace where I can download it. I was under the impression that GFA made GFA Basic 2 freely distributable sometime after GFA Basic 3 hit the market, but I could be wrong about that.

I would even buy it on a floppy disk, if I could find one. . . Except that I don't have a floppy drive, and even I had one I wouldn't be sure how to transfer the program from the floppy into the emulator. (The instructions don't say anything about it being able to read a USB floppy drive.) What should I do?"

'Rein' jumps in and says:

"Tony [can] contact me about the GFA files he needs.

Tony replies:

"Thank you for the offer! It is not needed anymore, since I found the files on a magazine disk."

'Ryan' asks about which way the darned power cable goes on a MegaSTE's floppy drive:

"I took apart my "new" MEGA STE case to see what it was like, and disconnected the power cable from the floppy drive in the process. When trying to reassemble, I discovered that the cable would physically fit in either orientation, and now I'm afraid to reconnect it for fear I'll do it the wrong way and blow it up. Can somebody with a MEGA STE confirm the correct way that the cable is supposed to attach?"

Mark Duckworth tells Ryan:

"You said power cable and not data cable. Don't plug it in the wrong way or you'll fry the drive. Done it once :-P The power connector should have an indentation on one of the sides and a linear

bump on the other side offset near the middle. The bump side goes up, the indentation side goes down."

'Jimmie' asks about mice for a 1040:

"will an amiga mouse work on the atari 1040st? if not and you have one for sale (original will do fine) please let me know."

Peter Slegg tells Jimmie:

"The Mouse on my St has an Amiga/Atari switch on the bottom. I think it swaps two of the wires in the 9pin connector but it may be more complicated than that."

Rory McMahon asks about terminating the MegaE's internal SCSI hard drive:

"I thought I had read somewhere that the internal drive should not have termination resistors. Is this true? The Quantum 105S has the term packs on the drive..."

Roger Burrows tells Rory:

"If I remember correctly, the internal drive on a Mega is connected via an internal host adapter. So there is only one drive on the SCSI bus. So, assuming the host adapter conforms to the SCSI spec, there should be terminators on the host adaptor and on the drive. The bus itself is not very long, so even if the host adapter is conformant, you may well be able to get away with only one set of terminators (on the adapter). But the spec says there ought to be terminators on both.

Unless it's broken, my advice is not to try to fix it."

Well folks, that's it for this week. See? I told you it was going to be a short column. Tune in again next week, same time, same station, and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

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->In This Week's Gaming Section - Sony Warns of PS3 Preorder Scams!
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                                          Neverwinter Nights 2 Ships!
                                          And much more!
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->A-ONE's Game Console Industry News - The Latest Gaming News!

Sony Warns of PlayStation 3 Scams

Sony Corp. issued a warning Tuesday against false promotional offers for its upcoming PlayStation 3 video game console.

A number of Web sites have been promoting pre-orders on discounted or bulk shipments of the game system - without the cooperation of Sony, the company stated.

Company representatives did not name the sites but suggested consumers can avoid potential scams by purchasing PlayStation products only from authorized retailers and resellers, which includes well-known stores such as GameStop, EB Games, Best Buy and Wal-Mart.

The PlayStation 3 system, with models priced between \$500 and \$600, is set to go on sale in the U.S. on Nov. 17, though only in limited quantities.

Some authorized stores began taking pre-orders on Oct. 10. At some GameStop and EB Game locations, the orders were snapped up within minutes.

Sony has said it plans to ship 6 million Playstation 3 machines in its fiscal year through March 2007.

Nintendo Picks GameStop, Toys "R" Us for Wii Launch

Nintendo Co. said on Thursday that it chose GameStop Corp. and Toys "R" Us as the U.S. retailers that will host the launch of its new Wii video game console, which goes on sale on November 19.

GameStop and Toys "R" Us have already taken Wii "pre-orders," in which customers are able to reserve a console in advance of the official launch.

With demand for the Wii already building, video game retailer GameStop and toy store Toys "R" Us said they had quickly run through the supply of consoles that they allotted for the early orders.

The Wii launch will take place two days after Sony Corp.'s PlayStation 3 hits U.S. stores, marking the start of the holiday shopping season when video game makers traditionally reap more than half of their annual sales.

In a repeat of Microsoft Corp's introduction of the Xbox 360 last year, the Wii and the PS3 are expected to be in short supply as demand outstrips the companies' ability to turn out the new devices.

The Wii comes with a motion-sensing controller that lets players simulate swinging a tennis racquet, hitting a golf ball or wielding a sword. Its \$249.99 price tag is a fraction of the cost of the PlayStation 3, which is priced at \$499.99 or \$599.99 depending on features.

Toys "R" Us' flagship Times Square store in New York and GameStop's Universal CityWalk store in Los Angeles will host the official launch event.

While other consumer electronics retailers, such as Best Buy Co Inc. and Circuit City may also start selling the unit at midnight on the 19th, the partnership could mean that Toys "R" Us and GameStop may have access to better Wii supplies.

A GameStop spokesman said the company was not releasing any Wii allocation or reservations figures. A spokeswoman for Toys "R" Us said the retailer "will be in a great stock position" for the midnight launch.

Even if GameStop and Toys "R" Us do not snag a better-than-average supply, aligning themselves with Nintendo and the launch publicity could help boost traffic in their stores, as customers come to them seeking the new system.

Toys "R" Us, which has struggled in recent years with difficult market conditions for toy sellers, earlier this year installed a former Best Buy executive as president of its U.S. business and has said it is looking to expand relationships with electronics manufacturers as it tries to boost sales.

The "official" Nintendo midnight launch events at Toys "R" Us and GameStop will feature live music and entertainment, and a countdown to the moment that the console goes on sale.

Eidos Celebrates with Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Anniversary

Eidos Interactive Ltd., one of the world's leading publishers and developers of entertainment software, today confirms that the next Tomb Raider game will be entitled Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Anniversary and is set for release on PlayStation 2, PlayStation Portable (PSP) and PC in 2007.

Inspired by the first Tomb Raider videogame, originally released in 1996, LARA CROFT TOMB RAIDER: ANNIVERSARY is a totally new 2006 adventure for Lara, faithfully preserving the elements which made the original Tomb Raider such a classic, selling over 7 million copies worldwide. Using an enhanced "Tomb Raider: Legend"; game engine, the graphics, technology, physics and engine bring Lara's adventure and pursuit of a mystical artefact known only as the Scion right up to today's technology standards and will offer gamers a completely new gameplay experience.

"Over the years we have had literally thousands of requests to re-make the original Tomb Raider for today's gamer, we have gone a step further, we have taken the original story and made a completely new version for Tomb Raider: Anniversary" said Kathryn Clements, Senior Brand Manager, Eidos. "We are re-telling an incredible story using today's technology, we've taken all of the key moments from the original game and put them into the context of a brand new Tomb Raider adventure which will make fans of the franchise extremely happy but also attract a completely new audience."

"We've captured the essence of what made the original game so special and with today's technology, created a game that pushes the boundaries of the

current gaming consoles. Tomb Raider: Anniversary is a special celebration of Lara's reign as videogaming's leading lady" said Ian Livingstone, Eidos.

Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Anniversary is currently in development by Crystal Dynamics and will be available in 2007 on PlayStation 2, PSP and PC

Atari Ships Neverwinter Nights 2

Atari, Inc. and Obsidian Entertainment today announced that the highly-anticipated Neverwinter Nights 2 has shipped to stores nationwide. Neverwinter Nights 2, the sequel to BioWare Corp.'s best-selling and genre-defining role-playing game, is set in the Dungeons & Dragons Forgotten Realms(r) universe created by Wizards of the Coast, a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc., and will transport players back to the embattled city of Neverwinter.

Dungeons & Dragons is under license from the Hasbro Properties Group, the intellectual property development arm of Hasbro. Rated "T" for Teen, Neverwinter Nights 2 is available for Windows platform at a suggested retail price of \$49.95.

Developed by Obsidian Entertainment, Neverwinter Nights 2 features a new, extensive single-player game with deep character development and a powerful new toolset that provides players with unprecedented ability to create their own universes, quests and storylines. A limited edition of Neverwinter Nights 2 is also available at retailers nationwide for \$59.95.

Neverwinter Nights 2 Limited Edition features a robust array of collectibles including exclusive in-game content such as a powerful new feat called Blessed of Waukeen that will grant a bonus to all saving throws, two special items, access to a unique weapon, and a magical golden aura that surrounds players' characters. A detailed cloth map showing in-game locations, a book of art depicting characters and scenes from the game and two silver antique rings (Good & Evil) are also included.

"Obsidian has delivered an outstanding sequel to one of the most beloved RPGs of all time," said Nique Fajors, Vice President, Sales, Marketing, Atari, Inc. "Neverwinter Nights 2 offers a deeply satisfying role-playing experience and a robust toolset that together will extend the life of the Neverwinter tales and bring more members to the community."

The Neverwinter Nights franchise has sold more than two million copies worldwide, is translated into 10 languages, sold in more than 40 countries and features one of the largest and most active fan communities in all of gaming.

More information about Neverwinter Nights 2 can be found at www.nwn2.com, which includes user forums, project news, development updates and more.

BattleZone for PSP System Ships

Atari, Inc. announced that BattleZone for the PSP system has shipped to retail stores nationwide. A modern update to the 1980 classic arcade game, BattleZone immerses players in an interactive world with relentless onslaughts of quick, action-oriented battles. Developed by Paradigm

Entertainment, BattleZone for the PSP system is rated E10+ and is available for a suggested retail price of \$29.95.

Set in futuristic international military environments, BattleZone puts players in control of highly maneuverable hover tanks, challenging them in close combat scenarios against their rivals.

BattleZone features fast and furious gameplay, photo-realistic environments, eight unique customizable team vehicles, an assortment of high-powered weapons and multiplayer battles. The four-player wireless mode lets players go head to head, while unlockable weapons, vehicles and upgrades add even greater depth to the gameplay experience. In addition, extra game content will be available through the BattleZone web site, www.battlezonegame.com, offering gamers news, leader boards and an exclusive online level builder tool that allows players to customize game maps. The extra content can then be downloaded to the player's PSP system through a local PC-USB connection.

"BattleZone for the PSP system is a modern day version of the immensely-popular classic property," said Stephen Baer, Senior Product Manager, Atari, Inc. "BattleZone is a fast-paced and addictive game that capitalizes on all the PSP system offers. Just as the original set the standard for combat action in the arcades, BattleZone for the PSP system is armed to meet today's generation of gamers anywhere they go."

BattleZone provides players with six popular and well-known game modes, including Deathmatch, Capture the Flag, Team Deathmatch, Hotzone, Knockout, and Fox and Hound. For casual gamers, the single player mode offers an easy learning curve for pick-up and play gaming and a tournament progression to win upgrades and enhancements.

Designed to take advantage of the PSP system's high quality display, BattleZone's crisp environments depict military combat arenas from around the world. Specific sights include abandoned cities of Russia, jungles of China, desert canyons of the United States, Antarctica's frozen tundra and the Canary Islands. Players can fight their way through the compelling open play of ten worlds in BattleZone, two of which can be customized online and transferred to their PSP system.

Computer Game Takes "Journalist's" View of Mideast

A computer game developed in Denmark is about to give high school students outside the Middle East a new window into the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. "Global Conflicts: Palestine," by Serious Games Interactive, will enable players to become virtual journalists moving through Israel and the Palestinian territories, where they can interview characters from both sides - civilians, soldiers and militants.

Once players decide they have enough information, they write articles relating to the conflict, which are then graded by the computer game.

"The goal for them is to recognize there are different perspectives, that the story can be also be told in different perspectives," one of the game's creators, Copenhagen-based Simon Egenfeldt-Nielsen, said in a telephone interview.

He said he hopes to distribute the game to high schools in Europe in March and perhaps take it worldwide.

At the start of the game, players choose one of six scenarios taken from years of Israeli-Palestinian violence, such as suicide bombings, Israeli raids in the occupied West Bank and in Gaza and tensions at Israeli army checkpoints.

The virtual reporter does not have to try to be objective. Players can choose to become a pro-Israeli, pro-Palestinian or neutral journalist as they navigate the scenes and "click" on characters.

Characters have pre-programmed answers, based on the journalist's questions and declared sympathies.

A Palestinian militant, for example, would volunteer more information to a declared pro-Palestinian journalist than to an Israeli reporter.

"You can steer the dialogue in the direction you want," Egenfeldt-Nielsen said. "For a pro-Israeli story, focus on how the IDF (Israeli military) perceives it. If you take a pro-Palestinian approach, you can dig deeper - interview the suspect or his son."

The articles that players write receive scores based on the program's assessment of the value of the information and quotes they gleaned.

"The scores are dependent on to what extent you are successful in writing stories on the right angle," Egenfeldt-Nielsen said. "If you are pro-Palestinian and you end up writing what we think is a pro-Israeli story, you get a worse score."

The game has been tested among hundreds of high school students in Denmark. It will be translated into five languages.

Many computer games centered on the Middle East have been launched in the past 15 years, most involving violence.

A 1990 simulation game by Virgin Interactive called "Conflict in the Middle East" allowed you to be prime minister of Israel and fend off potential strikes by Muslim nations, such as Iran, through diplomacy or even a nuclear attack. The new Danish game doesn't deal with victory or defeat.

"There's no winning with regard to this conflict," Egenfeldt-Nielsen said.

Nintendo at AARP Event to Court the Grayer Gamer

Nintendo has positioned Wii, its new video game console to be released on Nov. 19, as a system that will appeal not just to hard-core gamers, but also to older adults who may be more comfortable with Pong than Grand Theft Auto.

Over the weekend, the company proved that it believed its own press releases. For the first time, it took its products to Life@50+, an annual event sponsored by AARP, and held this year in Anaheim, Calif. The event, intended for those over 50, attracted more than 20,000 people and featured a wide range of panel discussions, celebrities and exhibitors showcasing products for older Americans.

"Nintendo has never gone after grandparents before," said Amber McCollom, a senior manager of public relations for Nintendo. "We're targeting this audience for themselves, not just their grandchildren."

Technology is playing an increased role at the Life@50+ events, said Bruce Sanders, AARP's director of national events. He noted that 18 tech companies were exhibiting this year, compared with 10 when the event was held in Las Vegas in 2004 (the 2005 gathering in New Orleans was canceled because of Hurricane Katrina).

Still, successfully promoting video games to an audience more used to card games than video ones could be a struggle. Nintendo's booth was in unusual company on the show floor, surrounded by those promoting the American Academy of Audiology, Lighthouse International and the Southwest Lawn Bowls Association.

In addition to Wii, Nintendo also promoted its Brain Age game for the portable Nintendo DS, which includes a series of exercises that ostensibly help to improve brain functioning. To entice visitors, Nintendo employees walked the show floor wearing buttons that said, rather optimistically, "Ask Me My Brain Age."

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A-ONE's Headline News
The Latest in Computer Technology News
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

Seagate Debuts New Hard Drives with Built-In Encryption

Seagate Technology will soon begin shipping its first hard drives with special encryption chips that will make it impossible to read data off the disk - or even boot up a PC - without some form of authentication.

The world's largest hard drive maker said its new DriveTrust Technology, which is designed to encrypt data stored on the hard drive automatically, will require users to have a key, or password, before being able to access the drive.

The new Momentus 5400 FDE.2 (Full Disk Encryption 2), geared to notebook computers, will come in several capacities, including 80 GB, 120 GB, and 160 GB.

Seagate said it expects to ship the drives early next year.

The world's first laptop hard disk with built-in encryption could help reduce the impact of losing a laptop loaded with sensitive files. Protecting data at the hard drive level - rather than just at the level of the operating system - will offer another layer of defense against thieves.

Easily transportable notebook computers have long caused businesses and

government agencies millions of dollars in damages and put sensitive data - including financial and other personal information - at great risk.

For many organizations, compliance with data security and privacy regulations have increased the pressure to beef up security at all levels.

Charles Kolodgy, research director of security products for analyst group IDC, said that securing data on the hard drive is "an innovative yet common-sense approach" that will help simplify security.

"As storage and security converge, solutions like Seagate's DriveTrust Technology are leading the way by providing organizations with the strong, easy-to-use security they need to protect their data assets," said Kolodgy.

In its current form, the drive is unlocked with a password, but Seagate said it expects notebook makers to develop other authentication technologies - such as fingerprint and smart card readers - for use with the built-in encryption technology.

So far there is no word yet on how much the drives will cost.

Microsoft To Release Office Live

Microsoft Corp. said on Tuesday it plans to launch a set of Web services next month aimed at helping small companies manage business contacts, calendars and online communications.

After months of testing, the world's largest software maker plans to launch Microsoft Office Live in the U.S. on November 15, the same day it will roll out a test, or beta, version in France, Germany, Japan and the United Kingdom. In a change from the test product it released in February, Office Live will also include a feature to allow small business owners to buy advertisements, tied to certain keywords, to appear alongside Microsoft's Live Search results.

Microsoft, already dominant on computer desktops with its Windows operating system and Office software suite, has been beefing up its Internet-based services to better compete with rivals such as Google Inc. By making it easier for small businesses to buy up keywords, Microsoft plans to peck away at Google's lead in the online search advertising market.

The company will offer a free, ad-supported version of Office Live that includes Web hosting, 25 company-branded e-mail accounts a shared calendar and access to Microsoft's advertising platform.

There will two subscription-based versions at \$19.95 a month and \$39.95 a month.

Both versions come with more storage and more e-mail accounts than in the basic offering.

First \$100 Laptops Due This Year

The first \$100 laptop PCs for the One Laptop Per Child program will roll off production lines by the end of this year, and mass production will start in the first quarter of 2007, manufacturer Quanta Computer says.

The Taiwanese company, the largest contract notebook PC manufacturer in the world, had previously estimated it would begin mass production of the low-cost laptops in the second quarter of next year.

The company expects to ship 5 million to 10 million of the laptops next year, and said orders to Argentina, Brazil, Libya, Nigeria, and Thailand have already been confirmed.

The One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) initiative is aimed at ensuring school children in developing countries keep up with their peers in modern nations by putting a laptop PC able to wirelessly access the Internet into their hands. The founders of the OLPC group hope the program keeps people in poor nations from being left behind in the digital age. The \$100 laptop PC concept has also prompted companies, including Intel, to start creating lower cost notebooks for developing countries.

A number of academic and industry groups worked together on the \$100 laptop design. The leader of the OLPC group, Nicholas Negroponte, is also a cofounder of the MIT Media Laboratory at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The group plans to offer the low-cost laptops to governments and organizations worldwide as an educational tool.

The \$100 machine will run the Linux OS on a 500MHz microprocessor from Advanced Micro Devices, will be wireless broadband-ready, and contain 128MB of DRAM and 500MB of flash memory for storage. The only major component missing will be a big hard disk, according to the group.

Global Internet Forum Closes With Call Against Online Repression

The world's first-ever UN forum on Internet governance logged off after four days during which prominent Western corporations were accused of helping Chinese authorities to suppress dissidents.

"We have not heard a public commitment from companies on human right values," Erica Razook, a legal advisor to the rights group Amnesty International told AFP.

"We're not telling them to get out of certain countries, but to take a stand on human rights in those countries," she said on the sidelines of the forum, which took place in the southern Athens suburb of Vouliagmeni.

Software and service providers Microsoft, Cisco Systems, Google and Yahoo! have been criticized by human rights groups for either supplying the means for, or facilitating, Chinese efforts to jail and monitor suspected political opponents.

At the UN forum, Cisco was accused by the international group Reporters Without Borders of selling surveillance equipment to the Chinese police.

Microsoft helped shut down the weblog of a Chinese New York Times

researcher on a request from Beijing, Amnesty said, while Google has been accused of self-censoring its search engine to filter out terms deemed subversive by Chinese authorities.

On the forum's closing day, Amnesty urged governments to stop suppressing freedom of expression on the Internet, and on IT firms to cease supplying repressive regimes with the technological means to carry out crackdowns. "People have the right to seek and receive information and to express their peaceful beliefs online without fear or interference," said Amnesty programme director Dan McQuillan.

"I call on governments to stop the unwarranted restriction of freedom of expression on the Internet, and on companies to stop helping them do it," he said.

Amnesty presented a petition with its call, backed by 50,000 online signatures. The IT corporations countered the criticism with arguments that through their presence in China, over 130 million local users were online today and had access to more information.

It was precisely this sort of debate that justified such a forum, even though it had no decision-making mandate, its organisers said, pointing to an attendance of over 1,200 participants from more than 90 countries.

They included national experts, IT firms and non-governmental organisations or NGOs.

"Four years ago, many people assembled in this meeting room would not have spoken to one another, (but) this is definitely changing," said Markus Kummer, chairman of the United Nations working group on Internet governance.

"The fact that the forum has no decision-making power means that nobody is afraid of (it), and this is conducive to a free and open discussion," he said. A number of countries, corporations and NGOs said they had formed partnerships during the four-day series of meetings and planned to cooperate on projects including privacy, online rights and gender advocacy ahead of the next Internet governance forum, to be held next November in Rio de Janeiro.

But there were also complaints from Iran and South Africa, which said they had not been given an opportunity to adequately express their respective views on ethical issues and connectivity cost concerns.

Originally formed as a last-minute compromise at a 2005 world summit in Tunis to forestall a rift between the United States and the rest of the world over control of the Internet, the IGF in Athens encouraged diverse groups to talk to one another despite initial caution, said Nitin Desai, special advisor to UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Internet governance.

"There is a culture problem, governments are used to a diplomatic protocol... while NGOs are used to shout loudly to be heard," Desai said.

"If you want to work with somebody, you're not going to be able to if you start calling them names...there is a little need for cultural adjustment on all sides," he added.

New Delhi and Cairo have already agreed to host the coming editions of the Internet governance forum after Rio, in 2008 and 2009.

On Thursday, Lithuania and Azerbaijan both expressed an interest in hosting the forum in 2010.

Google Ad Sales Outpace All Comers

Cosmo Buono calls himself a technology "dinosaur." But look to this longtime New York City piano teacher for insight on how Google keeps setting financial records.

Buono wanted to find contestants for an international piano competition he's staging. A student recommended that he advertise on the Google search engine, so he went online to give it a try. Now, when anyone searches for "piano competition" or "international piano competition" his ad appears near the top of search results.

His budget: \$50. His response: 35 new contestants, so far. "I was up and running in 15 minutes," says Buono, 54. "For somebody like me who isn't comfortable with the PC, it was quite a revelation."

Google set a record again this month with a 70% third-quarter revenue jump that has Wall Street salivating. The stock hit new heights last week to nearly \$500 a share. Citibank analyst Mark Mahaney says it's poised to hit \$600.

Since it went public two years ago, its share of Internet searches has nearly doubled, while its ad revenue continues to dwarf rivals such as Yahoo and MSN.

How does Google do it? With millions of customers such as Buono, who use its simple and ever-expanding search advertising program, AdWords, to reach customers. Google is on a roll because it is "the best and most used search engine," says Mahaney. "More people want to do searches on Google than Yahoo."

AdWords works on a simple concept: Advertisers offer their wares for a fee in the "sponsored search" section of search results, which appear on Google as well as AOL, Ask.com and EarthLink. Clients bid on keywords - the phrases people use when searching - and pay if someone clicks on an ad. Advertisers can pay from a penny to more than \$1 per click, and set a monthly budget.

"The entire process of signing up was really simple," says Buono. "If I can do it, anyone can."

Google makes updates to AdWords every two weeks. The program has greatly expanded beyond the simple search ad. What's new:

*Geo-targeting. Clients can choose which ZIP code they want their ad to appear in, and can have the ad appear on Google Maps.

*Time-slot preference. Want your ad to run only from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., when people are at work? No problem. Advertisers can refine their campaigns down to the hour.

*Starter edition. For folks who want a simpler, speedier way to get an ad online. Google asks new advertisers to type in their ZIP code, website address, a 10-word ad, monthly budget and keyword search terms. Click "continue," and type in contact and payment information, and the ad is

online.

"We're trying to make the process less intimidating," says Richard Holden, Google's director of product management.

Don't have a website? No problem. Google says 50% of small businesses don't have one. It will create a bare-bones site for new clients, with a basic listing that includes phone and e-mail contact, ad copy and a photo.

The companion to AdWords is AdSense, which expands the text ads across hundreds of thousands of websites and blogs representing what Google says is 80% of the Web. website owners share in revenues whenever an ad is clicked.

Clients include tech sites such as Engadget and Macworld and big guns such as MySpace, The New York Times, The Washington Post and Slate.

Last week, Google moved to increase the reach of AdSense with a tool to let anyone create a narrow version of its search engine for a website or blog. A blogger with a fan site devoted to BeyoncØ could add a search tool devoted to the singer. A wedding-planning site could tweak it to only have results from florists, caterers and venues.

website owners get the service free in exchange for showcasing Google ads. "In terms of potential earnings, this is the biggest one to look at," says Chris Winfield, who runs 10e20, a New York firm that works with clients on Google advertising campaigns. "Millions of people will put this on their pages, and Google ads will be all over those pages."

This summer, Google began offering advertisers the ability to run video ads on the AdSense network.

Businesses upload an ad - which can be created with consumer-level video equipment and software - directly to Google. They choose the types of sites they want to appear on, from general interest to those devoted to beauty tips, entertainment or more.

"You walk into the buildings at Google, and can feel the blood flowing," says Rich Silverstein, of Goodby, Silverstein and Partners ad agency. "Instead of saying 'We can't do that,' they say, 'Let's see if we can.'" His agency created a video ad for automaker Saturn that ran on auto enthusiast sites via Google. The ad begins in outer space and ends by whisking the viewer to his or her local Saturn dealer. The ad was "geo-targeted" by ZIP code, with each ad tailored for the local market. "This is a relationship between the viewer and a company that's never been done before," says Silverstein.

While Google popularized search ads, the form was invented by Goto.com (later known as Overture), which Yahoo acquired. But Google has far exceeded Yahoo in customers and revenue.

Yahoo is revamping its search ad program to make it easier to use and more profitable. After several delays, it is to make its debut early next year. Last week, Yahoo said its earnings fell 38%, due to softer ad sales.

Google's lead over Yahoo is bigger than Wall Street realized when Google first was planning to go public in 2004, says Mahaney. "Yahoo is trying to play catch-up, and they're finding just how difficult that is."

Microsoft recently introduced its own answer to AdWords, Microsoft

adCenter. But "MSN has 10% of searches, and Google has 50%," says Winfield. "It's good traffic, just not enough of it."

Google has been criticized by Wall Street analysts for being a one-trick pony. It makes all its money from search ads, while Yahoo has display ads, subscription fees and partnerships with high-speed internet providers. In search, says analyst Greg Sterling of researcher Sterling Market Intelligence, it is not too late for Yahoo to catch up. "Local advertising is a huge, \$100 billion market, and advertisers want multiple options," he says.

Explosive Device Shatters Window At Paypal HQ

An explosive device blew out a thick, plate-glass window Tuesday evening at the Silicon Valley headquarters of PayPal, the online payments unit of eBay Inc.. No injuries resulted when what local fire officials said was an explosive device shattered a 6-foot-square window on the ground floor of the four-story building in San Jose, California. The explosion occurred outside a building exit.

Investigators were still trying to determine the nature of the device. "Whatever it was, it disintegrated," San Jose Fire Department Capt. Jose Guerrero said. "Whatever caused this was pretty strong."

About 45 employees were working in the PayPal offices when the explosion occurred at 7:24 p.m., eBay spokesman Hani Durzy said. Most employees had left the building early ahead of the Halloween holiday celebrations, he said. "We have no reports concerning threats," Durzy said. "We are still investigating and we are working with local and federal authorities."

The PayPal offices, where 1,900 employees work, were closed Wednesday while police conducted an investigation. They are expected to reopen on Thursday. No eBay or PayPal online services were interrupted by the blast, the spokesman said.

Music Publishers Say Kazaa Deal Reached

The music publishing industry reached a tentative deal with operators of the Kazaa file-sharing network over claims of copyright infringement, an industry group said.

Publishers pursuing a class-action suit against Kazaa informed U.S. District Court on Monday that the peer-to-peer network had agreed to pay "a substantial sum" under the agreement, the National Music Publishers' Association said in a statement.

The amount of the settlement was not disclosed. It is subject to final approval by the association board.

The settlement "will be another key milestone of the ongoing transformation of the digital music marketplace to one that will allow legal services to thrive," NMPA President and Chief Executive David Israelite said in the statement. Phil Armstrong, a spokesman for Sharman Networks Ltd., which owns and distributes Kazaa, said he was not familiar with the lawsuit and

declined to comment.

Sharman Networks announced in July that it had settled copyright infringement lawsuits with music labels and movie studios, agreeing to redesign its software to block customers from downloading protected music and movies and to pay more than \$115 million in penalties.

The agreements are among a wave of legal settlements between file-sharing networks and the entertainment industry since the Supreme Court ruled last year that technology companies caught encouraging customers to steal music and movies over the Internet could be sued.

Last month, a federal judge ruled against StreamCast Inc., the distributor of the Morpheus online file-sharing software, finding the firm encouraged computer users to share music, movies and other copyright works without permission.

MacIT Conference Returns to Macworld Expo

IDG World Expo on Tuesday announced the schedule for the MacIT Conference at Macworld Conference & Expo, which returns to San Francisco's Moscone Center from January 8 - 12, 2007.

The three-day MacIT Conference provides in-depth training in client, security and network management techniques. This year, IDG World Expo has announced that Schoun Regan, long a fixture of the MacIT track and CEO of ITInstruction.com, has been appointed the Conference Chair for the event.

The MacIT conference track features 45 different sessions broken into five topics: System Imaging & Deployment; Mac OS X In the Enterprise Arena, Service Solutions Using Mac OS X Server; Mac OS X Management and Administration, and Securing Mac OS X.

New highlights of this year's MacIT conference schedule include 'The Mac IT Kick-Off Forum,' featuring Regan, Josh Wisenbaker, Philip Rinehart and others; Amit Singh's 'Taming Mac OS X File Systems' session; 'Managing Directory Services on Mac OS X and Mac OS X Server,' by Regan and Nigel Kersten; 'Optimizing Mac OS X Server File Services,' from Kersten; and 'Xserve and Leopard Server,' presented by Apple product managers Doug Brooks and Eric Zelenka.

More details about these and other sessions for Macworld Expo are available from the Web site.

Republicans Outnumber Democrats Online

Republicans outnumber Democrats on the Web, and the most common political leaning is moderate, a Web research firm said Wednesday.

Fully, 36.6 percent of U.S. online adults are Republicans, 30.8 percent are Democrats and 17.3 percent are Independents, Nielsen/NetRatings said. The Web site with the highest concentration of Republicans is RushLimbaugh.com, while BlackAmericaWeb.com had the highest percentage of Democrats.

"The fact that the online population is more heavily composed of Republicans than Democrats is principally a function of the Republican party's higher composition within the overall electorate," Nielsen/NetRatings analyst Ken Cassar said in a statement. "This is exacerbated by the fact that online penetration continues to be deeper among affluent households, which have historically skewed Republican."

In its survey, Nielsen also found that 36.1 percent of respondents identified themselves as "moderate," 32.5 percent as "conservative" or "very conservative," and 19.8 percent as "liberal" or "very liberal."

Too Much English On Web 'Risks Crowding Out Other Cultures'

Experts at a UN forum on Internet governance have warned that the predominant use of English on the worldwide web needs to be checked before it crowds out other languages.

They fear forms of cultural knowledge accumulated over centuries of human progress could be lost for ever.

"Some 90 percent of 6,000 languages (at use today) are not represented on the Internet," Yoshinori Imai of NHK, Japan's Broadcasting Corporation, said Wednesday.

"These people could be left out in the desert of no information and no knowledge," he said.

In countries such as Colombia and Senegal, oral tradition and cultural heritage that could be used for research and education purposes may never reach the broader world, sociologists and linguists told the four-day forum, held in the southern Athens suburb of Vouliagmeni until November 2.

"A large part of the population are voiceless because they cannot share the information," said Adama Samassekou, president of the African Academy of Languages in Mali.

"Every time a language dies, a vision of the world disappears," he said. "Even in the research field there's a linguistic bias, English is far and away the dominant language," added Divina Frau-Meigs, a professor of media sociology at the University of Sorbonne in Paris.

When it comes to creating sites with non-English content, users in many countries face difficulty in that HTML - computer language through which web pages are created - largely uses English words and abbreviations, said Bernard Benhamou, senior lecturer on the information society at the Political Sciences Institute in Paris.

"For (Westerners) this does not mean much, but for a user who doesn't speak English it's a hell of a task," he told AFP.

In one case in Cambodia, the local Internet community developed its own software in Khmer after being turned down by a software developer, said Markus Kummer, chairman of the United Nations working group on Internet governance.

For the time being, initiatives to diversify language use on the Internet

are undertaken by various countries at local level.

But the United Nations and other organisations such as ICANN, the non-profit organisation that manages the Internet's technical root, are mindful that fragmentation could occur if this issue is not adequately addressed.

If that were ever to happen, experts say that typing an Internet address would produce different links depending on the user's geographical location, while email would get hopelessly lost en route.

"The risk of fragmentation today is low, but if were to occur it would be really bad," said Patrick Faelstroem, a senior consulting engineer at Cisco Systems and a member of the Swedish government's IT policy and strategy group. "It would mean that if you send me an email from Greece, I may not be able to even reply to you from Sweden," he added.

"Misogynist" Urinals Flushed Out To eBay

Four urinals shaped like a woman's lips went on sale on eBay Thursday after being removed from a public toilet in Vienna following protests from women's groups who said they were sexist.

Designed by Viennese artist Rudolf Scheffel for the "toilet-bar Vienna" next to the National Opera, the urinals featured lips covered in red, orange or blue lipstick, a bright red tongue and gleaming white teeth.

The urinals were in the toilets for three years but raised an outcry in the run-up to Austria's October 1 parliamentary election when they were used by political party supporters attending rallies nearby.

Women's rights campaigners described the urinals as sexist and misogynist. They will be restored to their original condition before being sold, the toilet's operator said on auction Web site eBay.

"Each urinal will, of course, be meticulously cleaned," the seller said. "The artist himself will sandblast it, brush the mouth's teeth, and give them a new varnish."

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